



Art as Inspiration and Consolation

Art
in Time of Corona On-line Competition
April - May 2020

Art
is one of the most powerful tools for personal expression but also on the
level of community and even society.
Engagement with creative activities has the potential to contribute
toward
reducing stress and depression.

In March 2020 Covid-19 triggered a worldwide crisis. The goal of Young Africa Botswana quickly became to come up with different ways to provide support, guidance and inspiration to the youth.

The America on the Move project offered the perfect platform; this project is funded by the U.S. Embassy, it commenced in 2019, aiming at further developing young talents and artists and eventually stimulating the creative industry in Botswana. During this programme we have been using the rich history of American street art as inspiration. Street art is particularly interesting to youth, it originates from the informal, low threshold setting and has developed into a highly valued and commercial art form.

Knowing that the youth would be clinging onto social media for inspiration and information, in April 2020 we launched the "Art in Time of Corona" competition via the America on the Move Facebook page.

39 visual art works and 24 poems from young people all over Botswana were selected.

WINNER VISUAL ART CATEGORY
OPIYO LENTSWÉ

WITH 1320 LIKES AND 1.2K SHARE



My name is Opiyo Lentswe. I have been drawing since 2014. And I am self taught. I usually create my drawings inspired by other local artists. Back in Junior and High school I did study art but I was the lowest in terms of performance and skill. When I completed my form 5 exams waiting for my results, that's when I began drawing once more, this time teaching myself. This resulted in creating my own way of drawing using different media.

All my drawings are found in my page @ForeignSkills

WINNER POETRY CATEGORY

THUTO SEABE

WITH 552 LIKES AND 618 SHARES

The Last Grain

She rose with the sun today,
bathed in cold water and left for work.
Afraid to see the faces that slept unfed.

She left hunger behind the screen wall.
Trapped and caged by the rented electric gate.

The pots will cast shadows in her absence, dancing on a stove with no gas to the beep of
a meter box
counting down to darkness.

Plunging her deeper under still waters.
And yet like steel she stands, smiling.

Permit her tears to soak the sorghum grains as she gives you signed passage.
She has seen life within her reach.

Hope stares back as saliva pools the rima oris,
Wetting canals food have not digested.

As her heels echo of a night spent cradling an empty stomach,
But louder is the agony of failure,
She walks with poise.
The essential worker.

My name is Thuto Vanessa Seabe, I am 26 years old, I currently live in Serowe but ancestrally originate from Mosu. This poem is about that essential worker who goes to work everyday to make sure the nation is fed when she herself is hungry. It's about the permit dispensers, the shopping market cashiers, those at the front line. It's about those who look like they have it all, living behind huge walls but with little to go on. I write simply to capture my stories and the next persons. It's a passion and therapy. I can be reached on Facebook on my personal page @Thuto Vanessa Seabe

RUNNER UP VISUAL ART CATEGORY

TIMOTHY DIKE

WITH 955 LIKES AND 1.2K SHARES



I am Timothy Dike, 24 years old, from Shakawe, based in Kasane. It was on 2018 when I dropped the pen on paper (I quit school) and picked the brush with passion. I learned more on the streets with my art than in any classroom. I make art to express myself because art speaks where words are unable to explain. I found art as the best tool to communicate and to heal. My dream for the future is to own an art school and turn art/creative industries in Botswana as a source of income not only to individuals even the economy at large. Being able to spark the brain that will change the world. To reach me out, you can visit my page BIG TIM ARTS on Facebook, e-mail at bigtimarts@gmail.com for more art.

RUNNER UP POETRY CATEGORY

NAOMI MAEZE

WHO HAS 336 LIKES AND 679 SHARES

THE WILL

caution :wash your hands before you read through this will.

It reads,"from Grace Wisdom, to my dear my grandchild, Nams Wisdom
Read this will with all the excitement
Not with the deep heart crushing sorrow
Am tossing and turning words to you am excited I could jump up the sky,
Like a little toddler when she sees Sofia the first
As words gladly and lovely Marry one another,
Into many things gather
As emotions tremble before the white paper
Am the creation from the great creator
He is the Genesis of all creation, motion, emotions and portions
In all your getting ,grasp wisdom my child, get it
I have blister's on my feet for walking barefooted across the path of life
The Chronicles of my life have been a riddle,
But somehow not kindly In the middle
I have lived ,did I live? Yes I did live my love
The heart of the spirit has no wrinkles one must know

As the sand through go the hour glass, there will come a time,
A time will come when the world will be in great turmoil
Maybe at the time you will be reading this will,
When all will seem like all hope is gone
Once or twice upon a season when this takes place
I prescribe Christ, the solid rock as the perfect antidote
Go on, you all need him now than ever
Near like breath, he can be even over
I have come to know that in this journey, we all have come to learn. perceptions,
misconceptions, corrections, perfection's
Of course child life can be drastically chaotic
And the pains you taste will be hectic
But the nerves of doubts in your mind should be totally silenced
Wishing for golden sparkle to dance in your poor yet rich heart,
waters of our soul's origin, in all this

Dreams might take a space of time to come alive,
But I know you will tag along with you your dignity just like a priest
One of the hour you will surely reach a crescendo
Indeed that chance is overwhelming trust this
I feel sorry for this generation grandchild
Flamingos of the same wing's my child: Revelation ;
It is not a crime to choose: Elevation ;
Are you putting on the whole armor of God: Restoration
If not the devil will play tricks on you: Situation
Salvation ;answer

We can tell of black lips and dark skin like mine
What do they symbolize?the symbolize hope,humanity,greatness
The inner voices that were easily frightened into silence
Yet their roars can Quake the universe
The whispers of dreams that amplify themselves,
Into great and mighty voices,voices of hope
Don't let anyone dare call our destinies "Bo Impossible, don't
Bones made of words, words made of stones, bones and words made of maths I am
unknown to wrong keys
Here comes the bride

I know you will continue looking forward to the laughter-filled high fives with your friends
again
To see vibrant souls jumping in the streets,
Be patient you all will soon be outside,
Carving paths and you will stand before kings
You are yet too precious to let fear ruin your soul my child, tell that to another soul out
there
In case you do, rise up,the journey is for all

creativity is a beast,its vast,its beauty,its al
I know poetry boils inside of you dearest soul
The kisses of words that pave way to poetry, kept dairy,
It's spaghetti veins still do their work in your small body
Poetry that echoes,that echoes life in abundance
A poet I have been told is an ambassador of magnificent insights
Little pieces that can only be spotted by her
The way you give an eye to the universe
Is simply complicated extremely extraordinary
Your creativity dances beyond borders

Message for Botswana

Let's do away with I have no one but myself to please
And strive to be each other's keeper
Get rid of selfish intentions
The routine rhythm of every day existence
Embrace unity and stand firmly on its ground,
Throw away ignorance pills
The massive development is that of the mind
Garlic is a king, with a little crown, without a throne
That is to say somethings are just bubbles
Yet truly liberating Christ is like a garden of all seasons
The mixtures and collisions of that lane of existence are quite astonishing
Providing excellent introductions of the good news
Can you be as tenacious as the wood cutters and never be ashamed of the gospel
The earth is eagerly waiting for them that are led by the spirit
Be still, keep writing, keep up the faith, never give up
As you sit under moretologa tree at chanoga always
remember this words this words
words grey haired old woman
I pass on to you this wisdom with all my heart beats. I love you,
I wrote this will, in present tense so you feel my presence as you
read. pack this in you heart always, teach others, pass it on, one day
greet my great grandchildren with a kiss on their
foreheads. everything is right on schedule, because everything works
out for good.

With love
Grandma

My name is Naomi Maeze, a poet from Maun, 24 years of age. I have been writing poetry since 2009, you can reach me @Prosnm Naomi on Facebook



This has been an extremely trying time. From the time when the nationwide lock down started I have been home and have not attempted to leave; partly because it's 'not allowed', but I stay home because I am afraid. Sometimes my fears feels like madness. One of the things that have kept me going during this time is being able to express myself though art. My pieces are like pages in a diary, allowing some relief from the anxiety and panic. I am sure many can relate to this piece, feeling like prisoners in our own homes and being flooded with information from the media. After completing this piece, I feel more in tune with my emotions and slightly less fearful.



STAY HOME, STAY SAFE

Darkness fought it's way in
Beneath the shadows, it followed us through
Souls forced to rest
By the killer that lurks I'm the air
Don't be afraid, have faith
They all say
Stay home, stay safe
Words they flood in our minds everyday

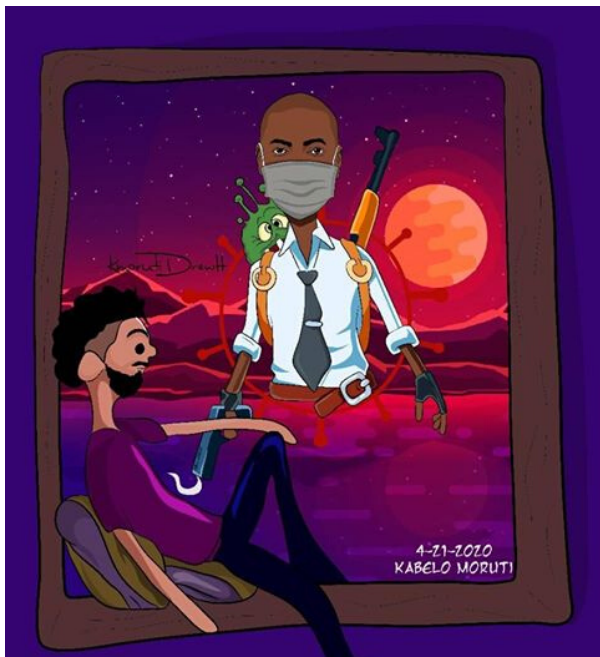
Why should we spread our wings
When we can't even fly
Behind these walls, the sadness, the cry's
Stay home, stay safe
It repeats in my mind
Encaged, running out of breathe
Somebody let me out

Stay home, stay safe
Get yourself together
You are not alone
The battle's not yours alone
The world's fighting with you

I see that now
Because through everything
The sun still finds a way to shine
I feel my heart beat to the rhythm that plays
I breathe in, I meditate
My body moves in
a slow wave
I lay my pencil on a page

Stay home, stay safe
Is now a beauty that I embrace
The art runs through
I'm ready
How about you?

My name is Refilwe Nkwe. I am a 19 year old girl studying psychology at University of Botswana. I'm a first year student and I find peace and joy in art. Whether it's drawing or making poetry. Art is not just a hobby for me but it's also a therapy. Whenever I am feeling down or going through some emotional breakdown I turn to art. Its my life. Other then wanting to be a psychologist I want to be able to share the power of art with other people. There are so many people talented and I would like to bring out that creative in them. I would also want to use in relation with psychology as a way of therapy to patients going through tough times in their life. Contact: instagram @its_fifitiger, facebook, Refilwe Nkwe.



I am 22 year old young man who has a passion for graphic design and I have been learning through YouTube tutorials. For more info on my work, Facebook at Kabelo Scaffbreezy Moruti / Apparel by Kmoruti

I am Lolo, 26 yrs old, Prince Tom is 23 years old. I am a full time artist. I have been doing art full time for 6 full years now. Prince is a student at Limko studying industrial design. We both grew up in Phikwe. We have been working together for the past 4 years. We exhibited together and contributed a lot to each other's growth. As for me I received basic education from school from Jnr school up to Snr school. I never studied art at a more advanced level. After my for form 5 I just decided to capitalize on my strength which was art.



My name is Bame Khiwa, I am a self taught Make Up Artist. With my makeup, I depict what the world is experiencing using a mode that will communicate with this millennium. My Art, My Make Up. Instead of using a conventional way of spreading the message, I chose a unique way that will jel well with this dynamic technological world, a world that is more connected to E-world, that is your Facebook, Instagram to convey a message of hope during this lockdown.
Facebook: Bambino's Touch

PRAYING MORE THAN GRANDMOTHER

Grandmother prays for Christmas
She hopes to see us again
Hashtag goodbye to the Bundus
Hello City life, our backs turned against her goodbye
Uncertain if she'll see us again next Christmas
Overheard goals that might land us in Dubai but..
Grandmother prays for Christmas
She hopes to see us again

As we vanish into the year, her tears remain in vein
She sees our fear, she prays harder now
Grandmother has heard about Corona
"Modimo warona" protect my children and grandchildren
This lock down is familiar to her, it came effortlessly with age
Years like a cage she finds herself alone
Legs not able to do much for her
In her loneliness grandmother still prays for Christmas
She hopes to see us again

She lacks but never asks for much
Calls constantly because she can't give us much
At this point she might need more groceries than she had in March
You notice now because you're forced to stay home that much
Dust to dust our finances buried but grandmother prays for rain
Riches to unearth from our pain and bear fruits
Fruits that land us back home this Christmas
Not on a plane to the beautiful Mauritius
I continue to hear you pray grandmother

I am praying too grandmother
For God to let me start all over again
Love you harder all over again
Not through the phone but in your arms all over again
To take care of you better and see you more often when this
lockdown is over.
I miss you.

Grandmother prays for Christmas,
She hopes to see us again
This time I pray with her,
but more than her.

My name is Gaethabise Precious Molwelwa. I am 25 years of age. I am from Maun and live in Gaborone. I am an aspiring writer. I studied my Ass Degree in Journalism in Limkokwing University and are studying for my bachelors degree in Motion Picture at AWIL College. I wrote my first poem and first unpublished novel inked on paper at 14 years of age. Contact: preciousgae@gmail.com.

I go by the name Prince Moyo, a young Motswana man of 25 years from Maun. I started taking art seriously since the age of 9 and one lesson that I have learnt in my journey is to be stubborn with my dream. I am a full time artist and I survive the streets by painting walls, shoes, portraits, caps, denim jackets and many more. The themes that I identify with include, mental health, human-wildlife conservation and health related issues. Visit my facebook Halethaba Artspace for more dialogue.

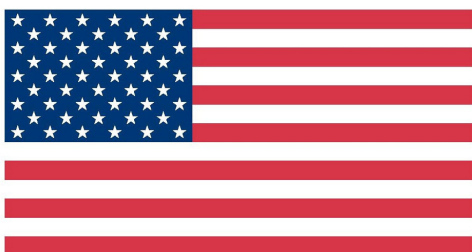


To see all the works please visit our page America on the Move or contact us via our AOTM WhatsApp number +267 72 845 542

Special THANK YOU to the U.S. Embassy for the continuous support and for recognizing the value and the importance of investing in talent development of the youth in Botswana.

Young Africa Botswana
May 2020

Keep safe and support local young talent!



Government of the United States



Young Africa
Botswana